

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the house voted to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program, known as CHIP, so we can give 10 million low-income children the health care coverage they need. This bi-partisan plan will ensure current enrollees will not lose coverage and will help cover three million additional children in low-income families who are currently ineligible for the program, but not yet enrolled.

Unfortunately, President Bush has threatened to veto the bill and deny 10 million low-income kids access to health coverage. He instead supports his own CHIP proposal- which would result in 840,000 low-income kids losing their health care coverage, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

What the President fails to mention, however, is that the bi-partisan plan we are considering today is fully paid for. This is in stark contrast with the over \$400 billion the President has already asked taxpayers to spend in Iraq. In fact, for the cost of just over three months in Iraq we can insure these 10 million children for five years without adding to our nation's debt.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the President to reconsider his ill-conceived veto threat and pledge to protect health coverage for these deserving children.